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*Eighth Meeting, March 12th, 1866.*

SIR RODERICK I. MURCHISON, BART., K.C.B., PRESIDENT, in  
the Chair.

PRESENTATION.—*Thomas Dyer Edwardes, Esq.*

ELECTIONS.—*John E. Flood, Esq.*; *Lt.-Colonel James E. Gastrell* (Beng. Staff Corps); *R. Richard Glover, Esq.*; *Joseph Hooker, Esq.*, M.D., F.R.S., &c. (Director of the Royal Gardens, Kew); *Major Henry C. Johnson* (Beng. Staff Corps); *Arthur Scott, Esq.*; *Colonel Richard Strachey, R.E., F.R.S.*; *Alexander Walker, Esq.*; *W. A. White, Esq.* (H.M. Consul at Dantzie); *John Young, Esq., F.S.A.*

ACCESSIONS TO THE LIBRARY SINCE THE LAST MEETING, FEB. 26TH, 1866.—‘Alexander von Humboldt; or, What may be Accomplished in a Lifetime,’ by F. A. Schwartzberg. Presented by Sir R. I. Murchison, Bart., K.C.B. ‘Denkmal auf das Grab der beyden letzten Grafen von Purgstall,’ von J. von Hammer. ‘Geschichte der Erdkunde,’ von Herr Oscar Peschel. ‘Geschichte des Zeitalters der Entdeckungen,’ von Herr Oscar Peschel. Both presented by the Author. ‘The Celebrated Theory of Parallels,’ by Mathew Ryan, Esq. ‘Madagascar and the Malagasy,’ by Lieut. S. P. Oliver, R.A., F.R.G.S. All presented by the Authors. ‘Catalogue of the London Library,’ by R. Harrison, Esq. Presented by the Library. ‘Geografia Universal,’ 4 vols., por D. Mariano Torrente. Presented by John Power, Esq., F.R.G.S. ‘Le Tour du Monde,’ and continuations of Journals, Periodicals, &c. &c.

ACCESSIONS TO THE MAP-ROOM SINCE THE LAST MEETING.—Five sheets of the Geological Map of Sweden, by Professor A. Erdmann of Stockholm; scale 1 inch =  $\frac{1}{3}$  mile. River Niger, a manuscript Map by Dr. Baikie, showing the Settlement of Lukoja; presented by T. Valentine Robins, Esq., F.R.G.S. Australia—River Adelaide. Showing the explorations of the Government Surveyors, Messrs. Auld and Litchfield; scale 1 inch = 2 miles; presented by F. S. Dutton, Esq., F.R.G.S.

The first subject brought before the Meeting was the death of Baron C. von der Decken, news of whose murder by the people of Berdera, on the Juba, had been received from Zanzibar during the week.

The PRESIDENT announced the lamentable intelligence in the following words:—“At our last meeting we entertained hopes for believing, on the authority of those who were best acquainted with the Somali people, that the lives of Baron C. von der Decken and Dr. Link might be saved. Alas! these

hopes have vanished, and the two bold explorers have been put to death at Berdera, in the manner which will presently be explained to us by Colonel Playfair, Her Majesty's Consul at Zanzibar. This deplorable event has overwhelmed me with grief for the loss of a man whom I was proud to call my friend, and who, judging from the great services he had already performed, was destined, I sincerely believed, to throw great additional light on the geography of that wholly untrodden country which lies far to the south of Abyssinia. At our next anniversary meeting it will be my endeavour to do justice to the memory of the noble spirit which has fled, and in the mean time I request Colonel Playfair to state the main facts connected with this sad catastrophe."

1. *An Account of the Death of Baron C. von der Decken and Dr. Link.*

By Colonel PLAYFAIR, H. M. Consul and Political Agent at Zanzibar.

AT our meeting last month we discussed the disastrous termination of Baron von der Decken's expedition up the Juba River, and speculated on the probability of his being still alive, even if a captive. I stated that in my opinion there was a *chance* that he might still be safe, though I fear that the wish was father to the thought, and that in my heart I had but little hope. Since then I have received a series of letters, dated from before the Baron entered the Juba, up to last month; one is from the Hanseatic Consul, another from Bishop Tozer, and two from the Baron himself, written in very low spirits. He detailed all the difficulties and dangers he had encountered up to his arrival at the Juba, and concluded with the melancholy expression—"Good bye; I will not say *au revoir*, for I fear there is little chance of that." He evidently did not feel very confident of success, but probably little thought that the expedition would have ended so abruptly and fatally as it has done.

I will not recapitulate what we have already heard from the Baron's own journal, and the Ritter von Schiekh's Report.\* I will only remind you that the smaller steamer was lost on the bar of the Juba, and that on the 26th of September the other steamer, the *Welf*, struck on a rock near some rapids above Berdera, about 350 miles up the river, and the party proceeded to repair the damage.

On the 28th the Baron, in company with Dr. Link, a Brava chief named Abdio, and about six native attendants, left the camp, in order to revisit Berdera; their object was to procure provisions, and to obtain information as to the route they should take after abandoning the steamer, which they believed could not again be made available.

On the 1st of October, the Baron and his party being still absent,

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\* *Vide ante*, Meeting 12th February, p. 91 *et seqq.*